

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the **POLICY, RESOURCES AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil on **Tuesday 25 March 2014**

(7.00pm – 8.40pm)

Present:

Tony Lock - Chairman	Mike Lock
Martin Bailey	Wes Read
Bridget Dollard	Manny Roper
David Dollard	Darren Shutler
John Hann	Alan Smith
Andrew Kendall	

Also Present:

Peter Gubbins	Yeovil Central Ward
Alan Tawse	Town Clerk

PUBLIC COMMENT

Julia Boon, Manager of Yeovil Shopmobility spoke in support of the Organisations' application for grant assistance. She explained that Yeovil Shopmobility had been in operation for eight years and now had over 1,000 registered members, which was increasing each month.

Julia indicated that as well as providing equipment for hire in and around the Town Centre, hirers were able to borrow equipment to enable them to go on holiday. She added that demand for their services had increased following the closure of the local Red Cross wheelchair hire service, and that the facility helped support patients leaving hospital who were experiencing temporary mobility difficulties.

Julia concluded by indicating that Yeovil Shopmobility were happy for the event chairs purchased by the Town Council to continue to be stored in their premises in the Quedam Shopping Centre.

The Chairman thanked Julia for her comments.

8/243 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 January 2014, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8/244 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Tony Fife and Jon Gleeson.

8/245 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

John Hann declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 (Applications for Grant Aid – Yeovil Shopmobility) by virtue of his appointment as a trustee serving on the Management Committee of the Organisation.

8/246 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

8/247 APPLICATIONS FOR GRANT AID

(a) Yeovil Shopmobility

(John Hann, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, left the room during its consideration and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon)

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the application having regard to the services that Yeovil Shopmobility provided; its reserves and the options available to the Organisation to raise additional revenue from alternative sources - including membership fees.

It was noted that the Town Council had contributed over £40,000 to Yeovil Shopmobility since its inception and that whilst it was prepared to support this application, there was a need for the Organisation to review its business plan with a view to taking a more sustainable approach to its future funding arrangements.

It was suggested that this should include seeking financial assistance from other sources and compulsory contributions from its membership, it being noted that at present the payment of membership fees was optional and the income from this source amounted to 6% of potential revenue.

RESOLVED that a grant of £5,000 be awarded towards the Organisation's core running costs. (S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence).

(b) Yeovil Tennis Club

RESOLVED that a grant of up to £2,000 be awarded towards any necessary outstanding works to complete the new tennis courts. (S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence).

(c) South Somerset Disability Forum

RESOLVED that a grant of £500 be awarded towards the purchase of updated software for the Organisation's website. (S.1 of the Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence).

(It was noted that the unallocated balance remaining in the 2013/14 Grants Budget amounted to £4,530 and it was suggested that the merits of carrying this forward to 2014/15 be discussed later in the meeting under Agenda Item 8 (Carry Forward Requests).

8/248 **CAPITAL FUND**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 6 refers).

During the ensuing discussion, reference was also made to the fact that all the funding was now in place for the Summerhouse View play area upgrade to be delivered in partnership with South Somerset District Council.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the position concerning the Capital Fund and the General Reserve be noted;
- (2) that the current position regarding the rolling programme of play area improvements be noted; and
- (3) that confirmation of the District Council's funding towards the Summerhouse View play area upgrade be noted, and that Authority's confirmation of funding towards future schemes included in the programme be awaited.

8/249 **GRANTS**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 7 refers).

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the need to ensure that the proposed amendments applied to organisations who had received financial assistance from the Town Council in recent years and who might choose to apply again for similar assistance in the near future.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the following amendments to the Town Council's grants policy be approved and adopted:

To help the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee make more informed decisions about grant applications, the following additional information must be provided by all future applicants:

- *any charges applied by the organisation, and details of any other income stream; and*
- *evidence that the organisation has applied to other grant funders - including other local authorities - in the past five years; the amount sought and the outcome of all such applications.*

In addition, a policy be adopted that grants can only be paid for a single year and a second application is not allowed for the same project/purpose within 3 years of the organisation having previously received financial assistance from the Town Council, unless the applicant has a Service

Level Agreement with the Town Council. The Service Level Agreement to apply as a 1 year agreement only.

8/250 **CARRY FORWARD REQUESTS**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 8 refers).

RESOLVED that approval be given to carrying forward the following unallocated budgets into the Financial Year 2014/15:

Committee	Purpose	Budget	Amount
Grounds and General Maintenance Committee	Contribution towards the upgrade of Summerhouse View play area (Minute 8/167 refers)	<i>Water Charges</i> <i>Fence Repairs</i> <i>Holiday Play Activities</i> <i>Sunningdale Allotment Site</i> <i>Fence Repair (carried forward from 2010/11)</i>	<i>£1,445</i> <i>£1,793</i> <i>£3,613</i> <i>£1,000</i> <i>£7,851 carried forward from 2012/13</i>
Grounds and General Maintenance Committee	Contribution towards the upgrade of Summerhouse View play area	Labour	£2,149
Promotions and Activities Committee	Future Town Centre Environmental Improvements	<i>Town Centre Environmental Improvements</i>	<i>£8,000 carried forward from 2012/13</i>
Promotions and Activities Committee	Future Town Centre Environmental Improvements	Town Centre Environmental Improvements	£8,000
Promotions and Activities Committee	Help promote the Town	Customised Souvenirs	£453
Buildings and Civic Matters Committee	Future community safety projects	Community Safety	£4,830
Policy, Resources and Finance Committee	Grants Provision (Minute 8/247 refers)	Grants	£4,530

8/251 **RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY – 2014/15**

The Committee considered the report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 9 refers).

RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be noted;
- (2) that the draft revised risk management strategy for 2014/15 be adopted; and
- (3) that the Committee is satisfied that the internal audit arrangements that are in place are effective and meet the Council's legal obligations.

8/252 **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – DECEMBER 2013/JANUARY 2014**

The Committee considered the report of the Finance Administrator (Agenda item 10 refers).

RESOLVED

that the Financial Statements and payments therein for the above months be approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no further comments from members of the public.

8/253 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED

that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

8/254 **NEW INITIATIVES**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 11 refers).

During the ensuing discussion, Members considered the merits of the proposed bids having regard to the agreed definition on new initiatives; the estimated initial and ongoing costs; alternative ways of providing the proposed initiatives and the community benefits of the proposals.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that subject to the approval of the Town Council:
 - (a) approval, in principle, be given to the allocation of £10,000 towards the cost of creating an outdoor gym at Milford Park, and the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee be requested to investigate ways by which the shortfall of £9,345 in the overall costs could be addressed, along with the ongoing maintenance issues;
 - (b) in view of the significant costs involved in installing and operating a Town Centre public Wi-Fi service and the wide availability of wireless broadband via internet service providers, local retailers and emerging wireless technology, no further action be taken regarding the pursuit of this possible initiative;
 - (c) the alternative approach of asking the Town Team to undertake a survey of the shops/businesses in the Town Centre which provide

Wi-Fi for their customers be supported – with a view to the results being collated and made available to the public to help them identify where the service is currently available; and

- (d) to help alleviate problems arising from the use of the Public Entertainment Area for staging Town Council events during inclement weather, approval be given to the allocation of £735 to meet the cost of hiring a temporary marquee on three separate occasions.

8/255 **FRANKING MACHINE**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Assistant Town Clerk (Agenda item 12 refers).

RESOLVED

that approval be given to the recommendations set out in the report.

8/256 **INTERNAL AUDIT**

The Committee considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk (Agenda item 13 refers).

RESOLVED

that approval be given to the recommendations set out in the report.

Chairman